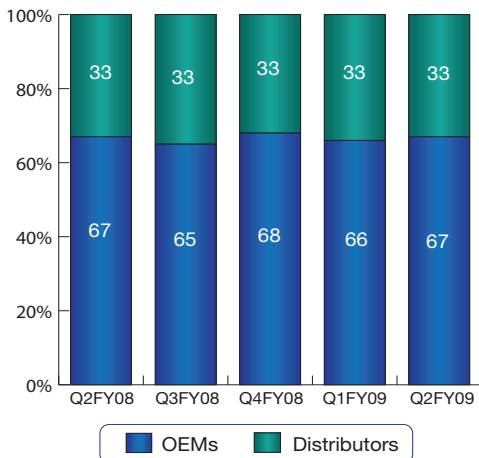


OVER 20,000 SERVED

PARTNER PROGRAM BUILDS CHANNEL LOYALTY

Revenue by Channel



The channel accounted for 33 percent of Seagate's global sales in Q2FY09.

Although tech giants like Dell and HP are among Seagate's largest OEM customers, the channel segment, made up of lesser-known tech businesses, accounts for a third of the company's annual revenue.

And thousands of channel customers, such as Equus Computer Systems, Leader Tech and others, are taking advantage of the award-winning Seagate Partner Program (SPP) to help their businesses grow. Last week, the SPP was recognized as one of North America's top IT partner programs.

Developing strong relationships with channel customers is vital to expanding Seagate's market share in the channel segment. Essential to that effort is the SPP, which has earned Five-Star certification in Everything Channel's just-released 2009 Partner Program Guide.

The guide is read by channel business reps who want to learn more about the range of technology partner programs available to them—and which ones are most highly regarded. Seagate was the only hard drive company to win this recognition.

The [SPP](#) is designed for channel customers—including resellers, system builders, system integrators and solution providers—that have aligned their solutions and customers with Seagate's products. SPP members benefit from support, training resources, marketing tools and incentives that can help them increase their profits, compete more effectively, and improve their hardware and service delivery infrastructure.

Seagate currently has more than 20,000 registered partners in its 10-year-old SPP. The program's intent is to communicate with and create loyalty among channel customers, so that when they call a distributor, they ask for Seagate hard drives, said Charlie Wallace, the company's senior manager of Americas Marketing.

"Through this program, we can show that there's value to being a partner with Seagate beyond just buying a disk drive," Wallace said. "We want to understand our channel customers' business and help them achieve their goals, versus a more transactional approach. Our aim is to be a partner beyond technology."

Driving Sales

One customer whose loyalty to Seagate has been affirmed by the partner program is [Productive Computer Solutions](#) (PCS), a Boulder, Colorado-based IT-solutions provider for small and medium businesses. According to Darrin LeBlanc, a PCS vice president, Seagate's program is particularly valuable during the sales process.

"Being in the SPP gives us the ability to access products and information that prospects can't typically get on their own," LeBlanc said. "This directly supports our

value proposition with the customer as we seek to differentiate ourselves."

LeBlanc also emphasized the importance of evaluation drives as a key [SPP benefit](#).

"The ability to request sample drives for our customers who want to validate a new Seagate product in their systems is extremely valuable to us," he said. "We can get our hands on a drive relatively early on and make sure it's going to work in the field, so that there's no interruption in the production of a particular product."

When a customer registers for the program on the Partner Center Web portal, Seagate captures valuable data that provides a profile of that customer's business model. This enables the Americas channel marketing team to develop targeted marketing campaigns directed to what's important to an individual customer.

The SPP also is an important tool for Seagate's sales teams, which can mine the program's database for leads. For example, when e-newsletters are sent to customers with new product information and calls to action—such as clicking on the [BlackArmor](#) Web page to learn more about this new product line for small businesses—the Americas channel marketing team sends Seagate sales reps the names of responding customers. The sales reps can quickly follow-up on those customers' interests.

What makes Seagate's SPP unique in the storage industry is its level of personalized communication. "We deliver timely, relevant, customized information to channel customers," said John Teeple, director of Americas Marketing. "We listen more than most other programs do, and we incorporate customers' feedback into the program."

Web Resources

One of the most important program benefits is the Partner Center portal, which provides channel customers with quick access to



John Vossoughi: "The Seagate Partner Program is constantly evolving to meet the needs of our channel community."



detailed information on Seagate products and to an array of online training. From this Web site, customers can also link to the Seagate [brand portal](#), where they can download product images, data sheets and other resources to create their own marketing materials that will help them sell to their end-users. Pre- and post-sales support is provided through a dedicated 800 number staffed by product and customer service experts in Oklahoma City.

LeBlanc of PCS said he often takes advantage of Seagate marketing collateral for trade shows and presentations, using it to illustrate why Seagate is his firm's hard drive supplier of choice.

"We use the material to say why the drives are better and to make customers aware of new products that they might not know about," he explained.

Last week, the Partner Program launched a new benefit, the Seagate Rewards program, which works like an airline's frequent-flyer program. Each time registered channel customers buy Seagate drives, they accrue points based on the dollar amount of their purchases. Points can be redeemed for prizes such as travel rewards, sporting goods and electronic equipment, which can be purchased through the Seagate Rewards Web site, accessible via the Partner Center portal.

"Seagate has a steadfast commitment to our channel partners' success," said John Vossoughi, the company's VP of Americas Sales and Marketing. "The Seagate Partner Program is constantly evolving to meet the needs of our channel community."